

Extraordinary Decision On the MORISON MEMORIALS

His Excellency Exonerates Mr. Morison, but Expresses Disapproval of Ministers Being Directors of New and Speculative Companies.

GOVERNOR'S LETTER EXONERATING MR. MORISON.

Government House,
St. John's, Nfld.,
27th June, 1912.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that I am now in a position to acquaint you with my decision in respect to certain charges made against you by Mr. W. F. Coaker reflecting upon certain actions of yours and protesting against your retention among my Ministers.

The fact that Mr. Coaker in his first Memorial desired that his communication should be sent to the Secretary of State made it, in my opinion, expedient that I should inform Mr. Harcourt of all the circumstances and of my views thereon before giving publicity to my decision.

As you will see by the enclosed despatch the Secretary of State is not prepared to express any opinion on matters which deal with questions primarily concerning the Government and Legislature of the Colony and with this view I concur.

It therefore remains for me to give my decision on the charges made against you which in brief is that I acquit you of all dishonour in respect to the matters laid before me and that I am still prepared to extend to you my confidence as one of my responsible advisers.

All the points are, I think, dealt with in my despatch to the Secretary of State a copy of which is attached hereto.

But although I have been able with pleasure to retain you among my Ministers and to exonerate you in respect to Mr. Coaker's charges I would not have it believed that the participation by Ministers of the Crown in large speculative undertakings within the Colony meets with my approval. I recognise considerable difficulty, and have so stated in my despatch to the Secretary of State, in Ministers preserving that aloofness which is almost invariable in England but I regard it as essential to good government that they should make every effort to do so as long as it does not directly and materially interfere with the carrying out of their ordinary professional or trade avocations.

Ministers of the Crown should in my opinion when entering office disassociate themselves as far as possible from active participation in such undertakings and that they should refrain from engaging in new ones during their term of office. The inclusion of the names of Ministers on the Directorate of or in close connection with new and speculative Companies operating in the Colony is both inexpedient and undesirable and to this principle I trust I may have your assent.

Inasmuch as Mr. Coaker's Memorials and the questions dealt with therein have obtained great local publicity, I have decided to make public the whole of the correspondence, as well as this letter to yourself, and I have no doubt that this will be in accordance with your wishes.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Sgd.) RALPH WILLIAMS,
The Honourable
Donald Morison,
E.C., E.C., &c.

GOVERNOR'S LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

NEWFOUNDLAND,
No. 22.

Government House,
St. John's, Nfld.,
6th May, 1912.

Sir,—I have the honour to enclose a number of papers dealing with a representation made to me by Mr. W. F.

Hay Fork Ran Through His Foot But Able to Work the Second Day

Mr. V. Thorpe, of Saskatoon, Sask., was saved much valuable time and a great deal of suffering by Douglas' Egyptian Liniment. He says: "While having last week, a hay fork ran through my foot. I applied Douglas' Egyptian Liniment freely as soon as possible and kept a bandage wet with the liniment over the wound. On the second day I was able to work again and was surprised how quickly the wound healed. Last summer I suffered greatly from boils, having as many as 14 at one time. On the advice of a friend I tried your liniment. The boils dis-

appeared as if by magic, and I have had none since. Your liniment is absolutely the finest thing of the kind I have ever used."

It is really surprising how quickly and cleanly a wound heals when it is treated with Douglas' Egyptian Liniment. Boils, pimples, ringworms, barber's itch and all skin affections of this kind disappear before it like magic, as do sprains, curbs, splints and similar troubles in horses.

Get a bottle from your druggist and keep it handy, 25c. at all dealers. Free sample on request. Douglas & Co., Napanee, Ont.

Coaker to the effect that, consequent upon certain proceedings, details of which have been sent to me and are now forwarded to you, the Honourable Donald Morison, the Minister of Justice of this Colony, should not be permitted by me to continue any longer a member of my Executive Council.

I conceive that it is, under ordinary circumstances the duty of a responsible Governor to come to a decision on a point of this kind without previously seeking the views of the Secretary of State, and I should have so acted in this case had not the last paragraph of Mr. Coaker's letter of the 30th March invoked the authority of the Secretary of State a fact which I cannot ignore. I propose, therefore, not to seek to evade my responsibilities or to shirk coming to a decision but to place before you all the facts, to give you my definite views thereon, and to inform you of the action which I propose to take subject always of course to your overruling authority.

Mr. Coaker is, as he states, President of the Fishermen's Protective Union, but I have no knowledge that he has any authority for his claim to represent them in this matter or that their views have been taken thereon, so that it must be accepted that the protest is one from Mr. Coaker personally. Mr. Coaker is also the Editor of a paper called "The Fisherman's Advocate."

The Right Honourable Lewis Harcourt, M.P., E.C., &c., &c.

Mr. Coaker has sent me two protests, the first in request to certain Labrador timber licenses, and the second (sent subsequent to an interview with me) in request to a property known as the Orange Bay property.

It is unnecessary for me to epitomise the documents, as they are simple and clear, setting forth that a certain Company known as the Anglo Development Company, of which Mr. Morison was an original incorporator obtained timber licenses in respect to an area in Labrador amounting to thirteen thousand eight hundred and fifty three square miles and that Mr. Morison was peculiarly interested therein. It is also implied that Mr. Morison improperly used his position as a member of Council to influence his colleagues in granting these licenses, or that, at best, he remained passive and failed to safeguard the interests of certain legislators who were put through in the year 1911 for the purpose of enabling the Company to extend the time for survey in the licence in respect to a certain area.

With regard to the Orange Bay property a more serious charge is made, namely, that Mr. Morison advised his client Mr. Strong that he might get a good deal of timber from Crown Lands and to the licensed contrary to law, or to put it briefly, that Mr. Strong as Attorney General advised Mr. Strong that there was nothing to prevent him from stealing timber from Crown property adjacent to his own lands.

Dealing first with the question of the vast area licensed-it is contended by the letters of both Mr. Morison and Sir Edward Morris that there was nothing unusual in this procedure, that they would have been similarly licensed to almost any responsible applicant, that the assumed value of the area is fictitious, inasmuch as a very small proportion of such areas ever prove to be timber-bearing and that under no circumstances are the public debared from entering upon properties so licensed either for settlement or otherwise or from obtaining all necessary timber for purpose, other than sale, for the necessities of settlement.

It is right that I should here state that my Prime Minister, Sir Edward Morris, has not only in this case but frequently contended to me that this system of licensing properties has been shown to be chiefly in which the interests of outside investors can be drawn to the timber resources of La-

brador and so attract British and foreign capital, that licensees can get into touch with capitalists elsewhere in a way that is impossible to any Government, that the areas licensed are no indication of the resources really granted, inasmuch as so great a proportion is unprofitable as a timber country, that by the introduction of capital a more permanent settlement by the public on the lands will be encouraged and that it is far better to pursue this course than to leave this vast territory neglected and unused without any prospect of development from any quarter whatever.

He has also stated that the great majority of these are allowed by their holders to lapse and are relinquished and allowed to lapse again and again, while the Government derive pecuniary benefit from the rents actually paid by licensees while trying to dispose of the interests which they have acquired. But whether the Government system be a good system or the reverse no personal blame attaches to Mr. Morison in respect to it. It is well understood and must stand or fall on its merits and should not prejudice the present question, which really is whether Mr. Morison took advantage of a system for which he was not personally responsible to acquire for himself and his colleagues certain interests, using his own influence as a member of the Government to obtain them.

The question of course further arises of whether as a member of the Government he acted properly in obtaining any rights at all and whether he ought not to have declined to be mixed up in the matter on the grounds of Ministerial office. On this point Mr. Morison expresses himself very fully in his replies and I do not propose to deal with it here except to say that there is much force in his showings of the practice of previous Ministers.

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The balance of this Job Lot advertised last month, 2 3/4 yards long, all cheap at \$1.00 per pair **50c.**

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Cream Zephyr Shirts, soft and cool, buttoned points, all with detachable collars—a special lot **60c.**

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just suitable to wear without a vest. They ought to sell at \$1.00. Poorer goods have sold at that price. **69c.**

They are offered at the low price of 69c. and are the best value in the city.

Fancy Madras Shirts,

dainty stripes, a whole big counter full, put on sale **50c.**

Men's Knitted Scarves and Wide Ends, **10 cents.**

Men's Panel Derby Scarves, value 35c., **20 cents.**

☞ We sell always with a view to sell you again, and therefore, anything you buy must satisfy you.

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Company, the best proof being that the Company have not sought to avail themselves of it. I am also satisfied that the extension of time for the payment of rent would have been granted under similar circumstances to any applicant and was in no sense granted to the Company because of its connection with Mr. Morison.

There is just one further point which does not appear in Mr. Coaker's letters but which has been published in "The Evening Telegram" a copy of which is attached to these papers.

It alludes to the prospectus which is a part of enclosure B2 attached to Mr. Coaker's letter to me of the 30th of March, wherein the words are used: "Besides this there seems to be reasonable assurance that the requirements for the erection of a saw mill never is enforced and would not be in this case."

You will see that I requested an explanation of this from Mr. Morison, and it is abundantly clear that firstly he did not prepare the prospectus, and that if he had he would have been simply stating the invariable procedure. The insertion in the newspapers of capital letters to the final words of the quoted paragraph is clearly meant to convey that Mr. Morison had "squared" the Crown Lands Department. This is refuted, firstly by the fact that he did not prepare the prospectus and secondly that even if he had he would only have been stating the usual practice.

But although this explanation satisfies me that the implication that Mr. Morison used his position to influence

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| Lemon Squash, quart bottle, 25 cents. | Boiled Ham. |

T. J. EDENS.

the Crown Lands Department is quite without foundation. It does open a question as to a point which needs clearing up.

The Crown Lands Act of 1903, Section 25, sub-section (1), page 9, distinctly provides that a saw mill must be erected within a given time. So far as I am able to learn no power exists authorising the Government of the Crown Lands Department to forego this provision; and yet it is foregone repeatedly, almost universally, on the grounds that it is unworkable and would result in the practical abandonment of nearly all areas.

What the position of the Government is under such circumstances, or how far the title to the license and the rights held under it are affected by this abstention from enforcement of the requirements of the law, I am not in a position to say. It is clear that if the provision is unworkable the law should be altered on the first possible opportunity.

Passing to the question of the Orange Bay property and the advice given to Mr. Strong by Mr. Morison that "there is nothing to prevent him from getting a good deal of timber from the adjoining Crown Lands" I confess that I was somewhat staggered by this paragraph. It does most clearly advise Mr. Strong to cut trees directly contrary to law that is to say to take and use (and presumably to sell) timber belonging to the Government.

Had Mr. Morison been unable to explain this satisfactorily and had the implication of the newspaper been sustained I should, without doubt, have held him to be an unfit person to hold office amongst my Ministers. You will see that his explanation is a plain statement that he forgot the section and was under the impression that timber on adjacent Crown Lands might be cut by the neighbouring licensees but could not be purchased. That is a very simple statement and it resolves itself into a question of belief.

Is Mr. Morison to be believed, or is he not? Personally, I believe he is speaking the absolute truth and that, strange as it may seem on the part of an undeniably capable lawyer or holding high office, he did forget it. To think otherwise would not only be to brand him as a rogue but also as a fool, for to deliberately place his honor and credit in the hands of another person by advising him in writing to steal (for there would be no other word for it) the property of his neighbour would be the act of a fool. One can conceive confederates planning some such scheme in privacy and even possibly of trying to carry it out, but to suppose that a lawyer of high standing, a former Judge who resigned his seat to re-enter politics, and who is at this moment the choice of his fellow lawyers as the President of the Law Society of Newfoundland and has always led an honourable life, would deliberately connive at such a monstrous piece of fraud, is to me an impossibility. I have therefore no hesitation in entirely accepting Mr. Morison's statement and in holding him blameless of dishonour in respect of this advice.

The whole matter thus resolves itself into the question of whether Mr. Morison's connection with the Company and his continuous actions in respect to it render it undesirable that he should remain a member of my Council.

I think I may take it for granted that, judged by the standard of the British Cabinet, a member so judged would feel himself called upon to resign his post and I might go even further and say that I can hardly imagine a similar case arising because the traditions and practices of the House of Commons are opposed to it, but it is widely different here and it must not be supposed that that difference springs from corruption.

Every single man in St. John's or of the Outports who can possibly take part in public life has to make his living by his profession or his trade, and over again bring him into contact with the Government and Government interests.

It therefore becomes extremely difficult for any public man connected with politics to preserve that aloofness which so easy in England. The cases quoted by Mr. Morison show this very clearly.

The question of the development of the country is one which attracts a large number of business men and I have in my mind as I write some of our most honourable and successful merchants who, while holding their seats in the Councils of the country are largely connected with undertakings in respect to which it might be said that they could use their influence to bias the Government.

With a very thorough knowledge of the country and with I hope a fairly general understanding of the conditions of political life in Newfoundland and with, too, an intimate personal knowledge of Mr. Morison whom I believe to be a man of honour and integrity, although perhaps a little indiscreet in this instance in not more clearly dissociating himself from the active operations of his Company, I believe that I shall be doing right in retaining Mr. Morison on my Council and in continuing to extend my confidence to him and I trust that you will confirm me in this view.

One more point must be alluded to. Mr. Morison in his first letter has given reasons for Mr. Coaker's hostility to himself and to the Government to which he belongs. These statements of fact made by Mr. Morison are correct, but I have not thought it necessary to consider that aspect of the case and have accepted Mr. Coaker's protests as those which any ordinary citizen is entitled to make to the Governor of the Colony and to ask for a ruling thereon.

It will be expedient that the correspondence on this subject be made officially public and I will ask your leave to ask for a ruling thereon, a copy of this despatch and of your reply thereto.

I have, &c.

(Sgd.) RALPH WILLIAMS.
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Cape Race Report

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League Football, St. George's Field, 7 o'clock this evening, Casuals vs. Fieldians.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.—The Rev. Mother Superior of St. Michael's Convent, Bellidore, gratefully acknowledges receipt of the sum of \$53.44 (one third of net proceeds of cricket match) per Mr. P. J. Aylmer.

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A reliable French regulator never fails. These pills are exceedingly powerful in regulating the excessive portion of the female system. Refuse all cheap imitations. "Dr. de Van's" are sold at 25c. per box, or three for 75c. Mailed to any address. The Rossell Drug Co., St. Catharines, Ont.

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